

Gender & Personality Case

Part 1:

K and S are both 25 years old, old-time friends, and now studying to become teachers. They are working on their final project together, and are currently discussing how to deal with the critique they have received after a tutorial.

S: Well, this was a total disaster! I am completely devastated!

K: well...

S: How're we going to handle this? (on the verge of tears). I mean, nothing seems to be good enough! I'm not sure we'll even pass.

K: Come on! It wasn't that bad. And I think the supervisor had a couple of points, you know. There are actually some parts that need reworking. Paragraph two here, for example, is totally incoherent. I actually agree with him about that.

S: You do?

K: Yeah, we need to restructure it completely!

S: (voice breaking up) Ok, so you think this is rubbish too? You may be right, but when I wrote it, I thought it was pretty good. I really worked with that paragraph.

K: yeah but..

S: And why didn't you say anything beforehand if you thought it was that bad?

K: well...

S: Instead of letting me sit there like an idiot today – it was so embarrassing!

K: Come on! Buck up! Now we have to try to focus on the work.

S: I guess...

K: It doesn't help moping about. And I had my hands full with my parts. We did say that we would split responsibilities after all, and then you have to trust that the other person is doing their job.

S: But can't we write things together? I mean, I can help you with your pieces too!

K: Well...

S: (Pleading) Take that piece about the aims and objectives that you wrote – the supervisor had a lot of criticism about that too ...

K: Mmm, but there I disagree with him. I don't think the critique was that relevant, actually. At the end of the day it's our essay and we have to stand up for our ideas.

S: (sighing) Yeah, maybe you're right.

K: Ok let's do it like this. You rework this paragraph and the one on page four and that final paragraph by tomorrow.

S: mmm

K: And then we'll meet up at ten! Now I have to shoot off to work. You know how much extra work I have now,

S: yeah

K: and it's important to me, so I have to be there in good time. I have some other stuff to do by tomorrow as well. Got to go. See you!

Part 2: The next day.

K: (irritated) I'm sorry S, but I'm actually really disappointed. I thought you would have done more by today! We had an agreement. (sighing).

S: Sorry but...

K: So what HAVE you been doing that was so important? You don't exactly seem to have overexerted yourself working on the essay!

S: I'm sorry! It didn't go so well. It was really difficult and much more work than I had anticipated. I didn't know WHAT to write! But how was work yesterday?

K: Don't change the subject! We're not talking about me now! The question is what you did! This is more or less just the same as it was yesterday! You're going to have to put some effort into this if you want a result!

S: I know, you're absolutely right. And I really want this to be a good essay.

K: yeah?

S: But my grandmother called yesterday and asked me to do some shopping for her, and I just couldn't say no.

K: mmmff

S: She's really old and sick and I really care about her. You just can't say no, can you? And then she wanted me to stay for some coffee and we talked, and I lost track of time. You know she really appreciates it when I visit ...

K: Oh yeah!?

S: Yeah I know that was stupid, I should have given it top priority. I did work on it until seven though, but I just couldn't work out what to change!

K: This is not going to work! I haven't had breakfast, and I can't work on an empty stomach. I've got to grab something before I can deal with this. We should sit down and restructure paragraph two properly.

S: mmm

K: We have to go through the logical flow, as well as the aims and method again. But let's ride down to town and have a coffee first? We can take the computers with us and work there? There is this new really cosy place that we could go to.

S: Great idea! Let's do that. I haven't been there yet, but I've heard they have these really nice cakes! Excellent!

K: Yeah – let's treat ourselves! You only live once, and I'm getting really stressed out about this essay – so much work! AND I have my job too!

S: Yeah I know what you mean. I also feel really, really stressed, and you work half-time too! It must be super hard.

Part 3: Some time later. K and S are cycling to the university. It's slippery and they have to dodge slush and ice patches. The first snow has come and the cycle paths have not been cleared. S falls over.

S: Ao ao! (Oh fuck, fuck!) It really hurts! I can't support my foot. (moaning). I can't do this! Too painful. Bloody hell! (desperate).

K: Oh no! Are you ok? What happened? Where does it hurt?

S: It is on this side, my foot really hurts ... way..wait.... Don't touch it! It's just so painful. I can't put any pressure on it.

K: Shit. Doesn't look good I'm afraid. I think you've sprained it. Just take it easy!

S: Yeah, but it really hurts! And I'm completely soaked!

K: It's ok. Give me your hand!

S: Aaooo, aoooo – hang on, hang on

K: Grab this. It'll be ok.

S: Yeah – that's better. But I just can't make it to the university like this. What am I going to do?!

K: I'll call a cab. You have to check this up at the hospital. There might be a fracture. I'll call a cab and come with you.

S: But shouldn't I just go home and wait so see if it gets better?

K: No way! Get this checked up. Look at your ankle, it's already swollen! You should get it on ice and bandaged. You don't want to mess around with this.

S: But you don't have to come along! You don't have the time! And we were supposed to work... How are we going to manage now? (Anxious)

K: No worries. It'll sort itself out. Here comes the taxi. Here – I'll give you a hand. Careful. I'll just lock our bikes and put them on the side.

S: Thanks – you're just so good! I don't know what I'd do without you.

K: it's ok.

S: You're just so good at taking care of things when all gets messed up. And I'm just a bloody idiot falling like that, so typical. If it hadn't been for me, we'd be working now. I just mess things up!

K: No worries. It'll be ok.

Part 4. After the opposition seminar.

S: So how did we do? I have a feeling that it went pretty well!

K: Yeah I think so. We did well I think! I think we had more to say than our opponents, especially on the methods section.

S: Yeah

K: And they missed a lot of the criticism our supervisor said we would get.

S: Phew! What a relief! I was prepared to get mangled! This weekend will be bliss! I'll just relax and meet friends and it will be sooo nice. I can't believe we're done!

K: Yeah, it's definitely a relief, but just remember that the essay has to be passed too.

S: Yeah, yeah yeah ... but it's as good as a pass.

K: Hmm. I'm not so sure. I think we've produced a good essay, but you never know. And I thought of one thing during the opposition.

S: What?

K: Do you think the discussion of our method will be enough?

S: Mmm. I'm not really sure either. I was completely unprepared for their questions on that one.

K: I know!

S: It was fine up to that point, but the questions on method totally threw me. But you managed to respond. What was it you said?

K: Oh I was just waffling on – I didn't know what to say. I know they saw through it, but who cares, our essay was way better than theirs.

S: Yeah.

K: Did you see their response when I criticized their research questions and whether they really answered them? They were totally lost for words!

S: Yeah, I think we were much better prepared than they were. I don't even understand how they managed to get a pass for that effort. Mind you, I hadn't really gone through their text in detail though (laughs)

K: (laughs) Neither had I to be honest! But I read enough to determine that it was a bad job (laughs again).

S: We rock! Let's celebrate!

K: Sorry, I have to go to work, but on Saturday we'll celebrate this properly at the class party!